THE NATURE AND FATAL INFLUENCE OF POPERY ON CIVIL SOCIETY.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE

OF THE

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A

SERMON, &c.

2 THESS. ii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day ſhall not come, except there come a falling away firſt, and that man of ſin be revealed, the ſon of perdition:

Who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called God, or that is worſhipped; ſo that he, as God, ſitteth in the temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God.

Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you theſe things?

And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time.

For the myſtery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

And then ſhall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the ſpirit of his mouth, and ſhall deſtroy with the brightneſs of his coming:

Even him, whoſe coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and ſigns, and lying wonders.

And with all deceiveableneſs of unrighteouſneſs in them that periſh; becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved.

THE goodneſs, ſovereignty, and mercy of God, have been diſplayed under three great periods of the hiſtory of mankind; in *Paradiſe*, at *Sinai*, and at the bleſſed event of

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the coming of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who was to be the deſire of all nations: And what is very remarkable, as ſoon as theſe diſcoveries of the divine condeſcenſion were made, they were treated by men with rebellion and ingratitude. To delineate the blackneſs, as well as the dangerous nature of theſe ſins, particularly under the laſt of theſe periods, will be the ſubject of your inſtruction this afternoon.

BRETHREN! PROTESTANTS! Were they matters of mere ſpeculation that are to be laid before you, I would have leſs right to ſummon your attention; but when I lay before you a ſubject, in which your holy religion as Chriſtians, and your civil rights as men, are particularly concerned, I make no apology for claiming your utmoſt regard.

IN the preceding chapter, the Apoſtle had enforced the propriety and neceſſity of a ſound faith and a holy life, by putting them in mind of the day of judgment. This admonition happened to be miſunderſtood by ſome of that church, imagining *Paul* meant that that important event was immediately to arrive. To rectify this miſtake, which tended to weaken the hands, and ſlacken the nerves of civil and religious endeavours, he in this chapter informs them, that in this they erred; for an event was to happen, which would prove dreadfully deſtructive to mankind, and whoſe exiſtence ſhould continue to a very remote period.—THE MAN OF SIN WAS TO BE REVEALED, *who, by all deceitfulneſs*

neſs and lying wonders, was to claim divine honours from the ſubjects of his ſeduction; and when his gloomy reign ſhould extend over the greateſt portion of the world, then God, in mercy to men, was to wreſt from him his uſurped power, and deſtroy his kingdom with a ſignal overthrow. Bleſſed be God! for he warns before he ſtrikes; and he cautions men to flee from danger before it burſts upon their heads.

To deſcribe the riſe, progreſs, and baleful influence of this ANTICHRIST, or man of ſin, is the method in which I intend to treat the ſubject. Having done this, the heavenly admonition "Come out from her, my people," will then highly appear to merit our attention.

I. THAT ſuch a power was to ariſe, is evident from the ſpirit of prophecy ſpeaking in the text, and ſtill more fully in the Revelation of John: And that ſuch a power has ariſen, has been demonſtrated by the painful and dreadful experience of mankind for near a thouſand years. The language of prophecy was expreſſed by ſymbols and emblematical figures. In this manner are the riſe and ſeat of this deſtructive *Power* expreſſed in the Revelation. In chap. xiii. 1, &c. it is ſaid, *And I ſtood upon the ſand of the ſea, and ſaw*, &c. In the prophecies of *Daniel*, beaſts are known ſymbols of the monarchies repreſented in his viſions; and the meaning is the ſame now. The riſing of the beaſt, then, will ſignify the riſe of ſome new dominion, or government; the

riſing

riſing of a wild beaſt (which is the Greek word here) the riſe of a tyrannical government; and riſing out of the ſea, that it ſhould owe its original to the commotions of the people. Seven heads are interpreted by the Angel to ſignify ſeven mountains, and ſeven kings, chap. xvii. 9, 10. Hence we may ſufficiently underſtand, that by this beaſt was meant a *Roman* government, different from that in being at the time of the viſion, and which was to ariſe after the imperial government ſhould be paſſed away, as five other forms of government had paſſed before it. "But, (ſays a zealous champion of the *Romiſh* church, the Biſhop of *Meaux*) how know you that *Rome* is here meant? I own *Babylon* is mentioned afterward, and therefore it muſt be that ancient, idolatrous, and bloody city that is pointed at." It is diverting to hear ſo learned and elegant a writer, ſo blinded by a partial zeal, as to violate the very genius of prophecy; for it is a ſoleciſm in language to ſay, that prophecy reſpects events which have already happened, that being the province of hiſtory. Now, at the time when *John* wrote the Revelation, the ancient imperial *Babylon* was a heap of ruins. But that we may not be miſtaken about the ſeat of this extraordinary power that was to ariſe, ROME is directly pointed at; for it is expreſsly ſaid, that the ſeven heads are, in one figurative meaning, to ſignify ſeven mountains, upon which the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth, was built. All the claſſical authors, poets, orators, and hiſtorians, delighted in deſcribing their auguſt ſeat of empire, by the epithets of *ſeptì-*

collis,

collis, orbis caput, orbis terrarum domina, &c. the city ſeated on ſeven hills, head of the world, miſtreſs of the univerſe, &c. And it particularly deſerves our notice, that it is ſaid which *reigneth*, that is, at the preſent time when *John* wrote, and *Rome* then was the metropolis of the world. So much for the ſeat of this power.

SECONDLY. But his dominion was to be ſpiritual, and he was to aſſume all the enſigns of the prieſthood. Hence, in the text he is ſaid *to ſit in the temple of God, and to affect to be above all that is called God, or that is worſhipped.* And in Revelation, all the world were to *worſhip* the beaſt.

IT is true *Caligula* claimed divine honours: But that bloody ideot could not be the perſon here meant; for the power which the prophecy reſpects, was to attain the ſummit of his greatneſs and ſpiritual dominion, by *ſigns, miracles*, and *lying wonders*, which the tyrant deſpiſed. To this it may be added, that this power was not to ariſe till the imperial government of *Rome* ſhould be diſſolved. But this event did not take place, till ſeveral hundreds of years after the untimely death of barbarous *Caligula*.

THIRDLY. It is alſo added, that he was to be a blaſphemous power: "He opened his mouth in blaſphemies againſt God, to blaſpheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven."* How far this character is applicable to a power

* Rev. xiii. 5. 6.

power now in *Rome*, whom mankind have reaſon to dread, will be ſeen in the illuſtration of this ſubject.

Fourthly. Further, he was to be a tyrannical, intolerant, and bloody power: "In her was found the blood of the prophets, and of ſaints, and of all that were ſlain upon the earth."† Cruelty was to keep pace with ſuperſtition, and blood was to mark all her ſteps.

And laſtly, It was, after a determined period, for ever to be deſtroyed. This wiſhed-for event is expreſſed in the auguſt language of prophecy, "And a mighty Angel took up a ſtone like a "millſtone, and caſt it into the ſea, ſaying, thus "ſhall the great city *Babylon* be thrown down, "and ſhall be found no more at all. And the "voice of harpers and muſicians, and of pipers "and trumpeters, ſhall be heard no more at all in "thee; and no craftſman, of whatſoever craft he "be, ſhall be found any more in thee; and the "ſound of a millſtone ſhall be heard no more at "all in thee; and the light of a candle ſhall ſhine "no more in thee; and the voice of the bride-"groom and of the bride ſhall be heard no more "at all in thee: For thy merchants were the "great men of the earth; for by thy ſorceries "were all nations deceived."†—Muſic was the entertainment of the rich and great; trade the buſineſs of men of middle rank; preparing bread and the neceſſaries of life, the employment of the loweſt people; marriages, in which lamps and ſongs

† Rev. xviii. 24.

ſongs were known ceremonies, are the uſual method of peopling cities, as new births ſupply the place of thoſe that die.

Now the deſolation of *Rome* is deſcribed in ſuch a manner, as to ſhew that neither rich nor poor, neither perſons of middle rank, nor of the loweſt condition and employments, ſhould be able to live there any more. So ſignal ſhall be the overthrow of *Rome*, or of ſpirtual *Babylon*; and ſo conſpicuous the triumph of the ſervants of God at laſt, over this blaſphemous, intolerant, and bloody power, that Heaven is repreſented as burſting out into loud hymns and ſongs of victory, in conſequence of this glorious event: "And after theſe "things I heard a great voice of much people in "Heaven, ſaying *Allelujah*, ſalvation, and glory, "and honour, and power, unto the Lord our "God: For true and righteous are his judg-"ments; for he hath judged the great whore, "which did corrupt the earth with her fornica-"tions; and hath avenged the blood of his ſer-"vants at her hand. And again they ſaid *Al-"lelujah*; and her ſmoke roſe up for ever and "ever."†

HAVING given the ſcriptural account of the riſe, ſeat, extent of power, cruelty, and tyranny, with the downfall and final deſtruction of this Antichriſt,—I proceed to delineate ſome of his features,

† REV. xix. *v.* 1, 2, 3. For a more full illuſtration of the topics touched upon in the preceding Sections, ſee Mr *Mede*, *Sherlock*, and *Newton*, on Prophecy; but above all, the learned and ingenious Dr *Hurd*'s Sermons, in which theſe ſubjects are ſet forth in a new and ſtriking light.

tures, as read and feared by men for many hundreds of years: And from innumerable circumſtances, the character of Antichriſt is applicable alone to the Pope and conclave of *Rome*. He was to reign in ROME; was to be a ſpiritual power; was to deceive the nations, and to be drunk with the blood of the ſaints.——Let us prove the application to be well grounded.

Firſt, The holy ſcriptures are the moſt valuable depoſitum ever intruſted to the ſons of men. In doubtful affairs they are infallible, living oracles; in journeying through the dark and dangerous paths of life, they are a lamp to the feet; in the Chriſtian warfare they afford the moſt valuable and ſucceſsful piece of armour,—the ſword of the ſpirit: They contain the moſt charming and ſoul-refreſhing doctrines; as they exhibit the Divine Being as the moſt auguſt, holy, and yet the moſt merciful and gracious God. They contain the moſt pure and perfect ſyſtem of morals the world ever ſaw. They exhibit the moſt charming and alluring promiſes; and faithful, but dreadful, warnings againſt ſin. In a word, in this ſacred volume, as from a flowing fountain, proceed the pure waters of life: Here is to be ſeen the only ſolid ground of human hope.

SINCE, then, the holy ſcriptures are ſo perfect a rule for faith and practice, we need not wonder that its divine Author ſhould ſtrictly charge men to peruſe its contents with faith, love, and with pure minds. Thus God charged *Moſes*, "When all *Iſrael* is gathered together, men, wo-

women, children, ſervants, all the ſtrangers within the gates; then ſhalt thou read this law before them in their hearing."* So *Chriſt* charged thoſe under the New Teſtament diſpenſation, "Search the ſcriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are theſe that teſtify of me." So all the apoſtles charged that the ſcriptures ſhould be publicly read in the language of the country, in all the churches. Theſe unanſwerable reaſons are given for thoſe ſolemn injunctions,—Without knowledge the heart cannot be good, and the ſcriptures alone "Can make us wiſe unto ſalvation, and thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works." And without doubt "Bleſſed is he that readeth and underſtandeth the prophecies of this book!"

But what ſays the Pope upon this head? In the council of Trent, which all true Papiſts hold as ſacred, the Bible is ranked *among heretical books*, and therefore whoever ſhall dare to read it, let him be *accurſed*. Indeed, both by precept and practice, all true ſons of the *holy church* endeavour to ſet aſide the holy ſcriptures. They call them a *dead letter*, a *dumb judge*, an *inken divinity*, of no more authority than Æſop's fables. This is the language of Cardinal *Hoſius*, who was a champion in the Romiſh cauſe.

Dr *White* tells us, that *Pereſius*† ſaid he thought verily it was the Devil's invention to permit the

* Deut. iii. 11, 12. † *Martin Pereſius*, de Trad. page 44

people to read the Bible. Every faithful ſon of the communion of *Rome* has been zealous to degrade the holy ſcriptures; and it is only loſing time to multiply quotations from their works, to prove this charge againſt them.

In conſequence of this practice, which is truly Antichristian, they not only burn all the Bibles they can lay their hands upon; but order, that whoever ſhall dare to keep them in their poſſeſſion, ſhall be burnt too.—I ſhall give a few of the many inſtances that might be produced of this horrid practice.

King Henry VIII. ordered a large edition of the Bible to be printed in *France*, as printing at that time was but indifferently executed in *England*; but by the intrigues of *Gardener*, two thouſand five hundred copies were publickly burnt. In the bloody perſecution under the Duke of *Guiſe*, all the Bibles that they could lay hold on were burnt: One, beautifully gilt, was carried in triumph upon a halberd, while the prieſts and rabble followed, crying, "Behold the *truth* hanged; the truth of the *Hugonites*; the truth of all the *Devils*;" after which it was ſolemnly burnt. —A bookſeller at *Avignon was burnt with two Bibles about his neck*.*——Thus they make war upon the Truth itſelf!

It will be replied, "There is no ſuch practice in this country among Papiſts; every one may read what books he pleaſes."—This indeed may be

* See *Fox*'s Martyrology, and *Clarke*'s Martyrology.

be partly true; but ſtill their prieſts uſe a very artful method to defeat its happy effect. They inculcate reading miſſals and books of offices, numbers of which are printing in this country at this time.—But what Papiſts do in Proteſtant countries, can afford but a very imperfect picture of genuine Popery; for paſs over to *Portugal*, *Spain*, *Italy*, the *Netherlands*, and other Popiſh countries, and ſee if the people dare open a Bible: No; and, to uſe the language of *Deborah*, this divine weapon, the ſword of the ſpirit, is not to be found among forty thouſand of the *Romiſh Iſrael*.

THE foundations of all genuine Chriſtianity being thus undermined, the whole ſtructure muſt fall of courſe. And alas! this charge can be but too eaſily proved againſt the church of *Rome*.—The Bible exhibits itſelf under two important diviſions, What we are to believe concerning God,—and what duty God requires of man. It repreſents the Divine Being as infinitely holy, merciful, and good; but jealous of his honours, titles, and worſhip, which he will by no means divide with any of his creatures, how exalted ſoever their rank may be in the ſcale of the creation. Yet the Popes of *Rome* have not ſcrupled to aſſume the titles and attributes of the moſt High. *Molinæus* ſhews us how the Pope is called God by the *Romiſh* doctors, and they plead that he ought to be ſo. "*Credere Dominum Deum noſtrum Papam*, &c. It is heretical not to believe our Lord God the Pope to have power to decree as he hath de-

decreed."* *Bellarmine* ſays, "*Si Papa*, &c. if the Pope ſhould ſo err as to command vices and forbid virtues, the church would be bound to believe vices to be good and virtues to be evil, unleſs ſhe will ſin againſt conſcience."†

THUS blaſphemouſly do they ſpeak of the ſupereminence of the Pope above God himſelf; and as for all civil powers, he is abſolutely freed from them, and high above them all. Since the Pope is God, ſay they, he cannot either be bound or looſed by men.‡ God ſays, that he can by no means clear the guilty, without the application of his Son's merit: But the Pope claims a power of diſpenſing with the moſt foul and atrocious ſins, for a little money. This is literally affecting *to be above all that is God, or that is worſhipped.* Thou ſhalt worſhip God, ſays *Chriſt*, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve; but the ſuperſtition of *Rome* pays divine honours to the Virgin *Mary*, the apoſtles, canonized Popes, and even to ſtocks and ſtones. The council of *Trent* expreſsly enjoins the practice, and pronounces an anathema againſt ſuch as denied its propriety. In vain do the advocates for Popery attempt to evade the charge of idolatry, by alledging that they do not worſhip the images, crucifixes, relicks, &c. but the true God through theſe lively mediums. The *Iſraelites* did no more, in affecting to worſhip Jehovah through the medium

* Gloſſ. extravagant. † De Summo Pont. *lib.* iv. *c.* 5.

‡ Vide Text. Decret. Diſt. 96, c. 7.

dium of the golden calf; but the divine Being was highly enraged at ſuch an inſult, and puniſhed it with ſignal ſeverity.

INDEED Popery violates every perfection of the Deity, but principally his unerring wiſdom; for the Pope claims INFALLIBILITY in all his deciſions, even when he and his conclave pronounce the word of God to be uſeleſs; and that his decretals are to have at all times the preference to the whole revelation of the divine will.

II. BUT the ſtudied diſhonours done by the Pope to the divine Saviour, pointedly mark that power to be ANTICHRIST. It is true, they cry hail Maſter! by affecting to acknowledge his divinity; but they put him to an open ſhame, by dividing his mediatorial office with the Virgin *Mary*, the apoſtles, and innumerable other canonized ſaints, many of whom, while they lived on earth, were a diſgrace to human nature; yet, having been liberal to the church of *Rome*, are made mediators in Heaven. This is a heavy charge, and therefore it ought to be well founded.—Let us attempt to prove it.

THE meritorious life and death of *Jeſus Chriſt*, are repreſented throughout the whole ſcriptures, as the only foundation of acceptance with God, and the only ground upon which ſaving grace can reſt. This charming truth is amplified and illuſtrated with uncommon care by the ſacred writers. It has likewiſe ever been the chief ground of hope to all holy men. For, as the wages

wages of ſin is death; and, curſed is he that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them: So the blood of *Jeſus* cleanſeth from all ſin." Yes, ſays the Pope, all MORTAL ſins, but there is no occaſion for ſuch an atonement for VENIAL ſins. But we find no ſuch diſtinctions in the Bible. It repreſents every ſin as deſerving condemnation, without merit of an infinite kind. But merit does not fall within the compaſs of created power. The higheſt angel in Heaven may be a faithful, but he cannot be a meritorious ſervant; how much leſs the impure, imperfect ſervices of ſinful men! But what ſays the Pope to this? The council of TRENT anſwers for him, and aſſures us "That if any one ſhall ſay, that we are ſaved by faith only, and that good works cannot merit Heaven, let him be accurſed." Nay more, they tell us, that in their church have been ſaints of ſuch uncommon ſanctity, that they not only ſaved themſelves, but they have laid up a ſtock of works of ſupererogation, to be under the direction of the church, in which we poor heretics are to have no part, being every *Maundy-Thurſday* (the day preceding Good-Friday) "cut off from any part of the prayers of the church." —POOR ſinners! what ſhall we then do? Well, if we cannot have the help of the prayers of *many mediators*, let us ſteadily truſt in the *interceſſion* of ONE.—We will find, as Cardinal *Bellarmine* ſaid on his death-bed, and who had been a mighty champion for good works all his life, this will be the ſafeſt way upon the whole. But pray how may

may ſinners have acceſs to this choice ſtore? One of their own writers points out the way to us, and tells us, it is—MONEY. For, as *Ambroſe* ſpeaks of *Benjamin*'s ſack, when the ſack was looſed the ſilver appeared; ſo only reſolve the moſt of the theology of Rome into that whereof it is conſtituted, and GAIN will be found to be the chief element of its conſtitution. Let themſelves be the judges in this caſe. *Æneas Sylvius*, who was afterwards Pope, tells us, "That the Roman court gives nothing without money. It ſells the impoſition of hands, the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt; nor is pardon of ſins given to any, but ſuch as are poſſeſſed of money."†

A Poet of their own ſays, "That with Them, temples, prieſts, altars, prayers, yea heaven and God himſelf, are all ſet to ſale for money. *Rome* gives trifles, and takes gold." He adds, "that baſtards, thieves, adulterers, perjured perſons, are not only abſolved for money, but admitted to all dignities and ſpiritual offices; and for money diſpenſations are granted for murders, though of preſbyters, fathers, mothers, brothers, ſiſters, yea of wives; nay, for witchcraft, inceſt with the neareſt kin; and, amazing! for the ſin of beſtiality.‡—*Bellarmine*, *Gregory de Valentia*, *Andradius*, and *Bonaventure*, all affirm that there are ſins that may be remitted without grace; that for venial ſins there is not even need for repentance; and if God ſhould puniſh venial ſins, he would be *unjuſt*.

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† Epiſt. 56.

‡ Claud. Eſpenſ. digr. 2. cap. 1.——Rivet. Jeſ. capulanus, p. 73.

THESE deteſtable tenets, ſo injurious to the holineſs of God, and diſhonouring to the blood of his Son, all take their riſe from this pernicious diſtinction made by the church of *Rome*, between mortal and venial ſins. For we ſee the moſt atrocious and fouleſt crimes are, for money, ranked under the diviſion of venial, providing the ſinner has plenty of it.

I WILL be candid enough to acknowledge, that I do not believe, that ſince the reformation, that unſpeakable bleſſing to mankind, theſe tenets operate in their full force either in *Italy* or *France*, much leſs among the Papiſts in *Britain* and *Ireland*; but juſtice obliges me to add, that this happy change is owing to that very reformation, in thoſe countries where its benign influence is more or leſs felt. But in *Spain* and *Portugal*, where Popery ſtill retains its gloomy dominion in full force, and the inquiſition reigns with all its former vigour, the true genius of Popery can fully be diſcovered. The ſame ignorance and bloody bigotry, as in the darker ages, prevail in thoſe kingdoms.*

SUCH odious doctrines, ſo deſtructive of all that holineſs in heart and life which *Chriſt* ſo ſtrongly inculcated, and ſo eminently diſplayed in his whole conduct, can be the doctrines of none elſe but thoſe of ANTICHRIST.

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* Robertſon's Hiſt. of Cha. V. Concluſ. Swinburn's Travels through Spain, 1778.

But of all the diſhonours which Papiſts caſt upon the Son of God, there is none more diſgraceful than the ſhocking perverſion of the inſtitution of the Lord's Supper. It was intended to be a memorial,—but they make it a ſacrifice. It was to conſiſt of bread and wine, but they make it the body and blood of *Chriſt*. Scripture tells us, that when this Man had by himſelf purged our ſins by his death, he ſat down for ever at the right hand of God; and the heavens were to receive him, till the reſtitution of all things. But their doctrine of the maſs brings *Chriſt* often down, when under the form of a wafer, which, after conſecration, loſes all its qualities; the body and blood of *Jeſus* are ſeen, felt, and eaten. A doctrine ſo big with abſurdity, ſo diſhonouring to *Chriſt*, ſuch an inſult to ſound reaſon, that we might naturally ſuppoſe that it would have been long ago exploded. But this is far from being the caſe; for although it has been expoſed by able pens for many centuries, yet it is ſtill reſolutely maintained by *Roman* Catholics in all countries and nations of the world.

Further, Popery has, for ages, not only held doctrines that are directly oppoſite to thoſe of the holy ſcriptures, but it has alſo ſhed its baleful influence on civil ſociety, in all the various relations and connections of human life. The divine wiſdom has placed mankind in different degrees and ſtations, in point of authority, rank, and fortune. In order to ſecure the civil and religious liberties of the whole, he has inſtituted the office of magiſtracy, to protect and guard the privileges of

the community: On the other hand, the community, to give vigour and effect to the execution of the laws, are required to pay allegiance and ſubmiſſion to the powers that be, for they are of God. Further, that the various nations of the earth may be bound in mutual fidelity, oaths, reciprocally pledged, are ever held ſacred and inviolable among all nations, even the moſt unpoliſhed. Theſe doctrines are clearly taught in Scripture, and they are ſtrongly founded in reaſon. Thus *Chriſt* commanded to render to *Cæſar*, &c. and thus *Paul* practiſed when ſummoned to appear before *Feſtus* and king *Agrippa*: "I account myſelf happy, king *Agrippa*, becauſe I ſhall anſwer for myſelf this day before thee."* The prieſts, prophets, and the whole houſe of *Iſrael* in captivity, were to pray for the welfare of the king of *Babylon*, a cruel and tyrannical prince, that in his peace they might have peace.

WHAT ſays Popery to this? They deny it, and treat it with ſcorn. Pope *Boniface* ordered two ſwords to be carried before him, declaring, that all civil as well as religious juriſdiction was veſted in him.†——*Thomas Becket*, (a canonized ſaint of *Rome*) by way of penance, ſuſpended himſelf from prieſtly functions, for conſenting once that prieſts ſhould be tried by ſecular power, for robberies, murders, &c.‡

IN a word, genuine Popery utterly denies ſubordination of the clergy to the juriſdiction of any

* Acts xxvi. 2. † *Albert Crantzius* 8, 26.

‡ *Baronius*, Sect. 26.

any power on earth. This I could prove from the writings of all thoſe who have been reckoned champions in the cauſe. But it would be only loſing time.

In *Spain* and *Portugal*, to this day, if a culprit fly to the church, it proves an aſylum to him, although his hands may be reeking with his father's blood. I will own, that in *France* and other more enlightened nations, they diſclaim this tenet; but in as much as they do this, ſo far do they deviate from the ſpirit of Popery, which never can renounce voluntarily any of its high claims over all the concerns of mankind.

But what is ſtill more dangerous, and has proved more hurtful to ſociety, is the famous tenet of keeping no faith with heretics, that is, whoever happens to fall under the diſpleaſure of the Pope. Notwithſtanding oaths may be pledged, and aſſurances given in the ſtricteſt manner, yet if the good of the *holy church* is promoted, by violating theſe oaths and other ſecurities, then to do ſo, is not only lawful but meritorious. When Admiral *Coligni* was murdered, and the beſt blood in *France* ſhed, after the moſt ſolemn oaths and proteſtations of friendſhip, the Pope, inſtead of declaring his deteſtation of the deed, ordered *Te Deum*, a ſolemn thankſgiving to Heaven, for the pepetration of the moſt black and bloody butchery ever effected by the emiſſaries of Hell. Loudly do the Papiſts, and *lukewarm Proteſtants* too, declare

clare, *Rome* holds no ſuch dangerous tenets. But it is well known, that they cannot, and dare not do otherwiſe.

THUS we ſee that ſuch doctrines tend not only to excite jealouſy and diſtruſt, but to unhinge ſociety, and to burſt thoſe ties by which mankind are connected. The God and Father of us all wiſhes and enjoins all men, to ſpeak truth every man to his neighbour, and by fair, candid, open conduct, beget mutual confidence; but Popery produces effects which are the very reverſe.

FURTHER, it is evident that every man was not made for a ſolitary, ſingle ſtate; and God has, on that account, wonderfully provided means for the rational gratification of his ſocial affections: But of all theſe, there is none more exquiſite, neceſſary, and endearing, than that of marriage. Amidſt troubles and cares, this tender relation greatly alleviates thoſe evils which embitter human life. And in order to give a laſting ſanction to this inſtitution, the divine Creator married the firſt happy pair in *Paradiſe*; thus proving to all generations of mankind, that marriage is honourable in all—all ſtations and conditions of life. In conſequence of this, marriage has been held ſacred in all ages. All the patriarchs, and the whole Jewiſh prieſthood married. Under the New Teſtament, the apoſtles married; and a biſhop was to be the huſband of one wife. Nor do we find, that when *Chriſt* inveſted his apoſtles with their high office, that he commanded them to divorce their wives.

AND

And of all the ſtations in human life, there is none that requires the help of this honourable connection, than the office of the miniſtry. The ſedentary lives of the clergy; their being often diſturbed with the ſtrifes of unreaſonable men; their ſpirits depreſſed, from a want of ſucceſs in reclaiming men from the deſtructive paths of ſin; all theſe anxieties are ſurpriſingly ſoftened, by a happy union with a prudent and virtuous wife.

Besides, to viſit the beds of the ſick, and of the dying, where death and diſtreſs appear in a thouſand melancholy forms, conſtitutes no ſmall part of the miniſterial duty. But by experiencing in his own family ſimilar afflictions, the ſervant of the compaſſionate Saviour learns to feel another's woe, and with unfeigned ſympathy, to weep with them that weep. He knows how to dry the widow's tears, flowing for the loſs of her virtuous huſband; and thoſe of a huſband, groaning with anguiſh, when the deſire of his eyes is torn from his embraces, to take up her laſting abode in the dark and ſilent grave. He teaches every relation of human life, to bear up under the evils that preſs upon us, with becoming firmneſs, and to ſubmit to the ſupreme diſpenſations of providence with calmneſs and reſignation.

These plain dictates are founded in reaſon, and ſanctified by revelation. They have been followed by the wiſe and good in every age and nation of the world.

Well,

WELL, but what ſays *Rome* to the marriage of this laſt and uſeful claſs of mankind? The Pope abſolutely forbiddeth the marriage of the clergy of all degrees, and the religious of both ſexes. The canon of the council of *Trent*, which all true Papiſts hold as ſacred and infallible, runs thus, "*Si quis dixerit*," *&c.* If any ſay, that the clergy who have received holy orders, or regulars who have ſolemnly profeſſed chaſtity, may contract marriage, and that ſuch contract is valid; and that all may contract marriage, that do not find they have the gift of chaſtity, let him be accurſed.*—Such is the doctrine of *Rome* reſpecting marriage. Let us now hear what the word of God ſays of ſuch doctrine. *Paul* aſſures *Timothy*, by the ſpirit of prophecy, "That in the latter times ſome ſhall depart from the faith, giving heed to ſeducing ſpirits, and doctrines of DEVILS, ſpeaking lies in hypocriſy, having their conſciences ſeared with a hot iron, FORBIDDING TO MARRY."† So then, it ſeems from this ſtriking paſſage, that to forbid to marry, is a *doctrine of Devils*. Let us prove this: And the aſſertion ſeems plain from the following conſiderations.

FIRST, All doctrine which is falſe, is wicked and deviliſh; and the Devil being the father of lies, chiefly of lying doctrine, whereby he blindeth the eyes of them that believe not, and corrupts the minds of them who are his children and followers. Beſides, that doctrine which is con-

* Ex octava Seſſione Trident. Concil. Canon 9.

† 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3.

contrary to the word of God, is of the Devil, who is its greateſt enemy; becauſe of the great miſchief which the word of God hath done to his cauſe, and the intereſt of his kingdom. Popery, therefore, which forbiddeth that which the word of God alloweth, and which in ſome caſes commandeth, is deviliſh doctrine. This needs no proof, but this ſingle conſideration, that marriage is of divine inſtitution; and in every period of the church, was ſtamped with the divine approbation, "That it is honorable in all,"—in perſons of all conditions and ſituations of life. And what can be more honorable, than for a virtuous pair to leave the world a blooming, riſing family, to fill the various departments in church and ſtate, when they themſelves, by the will of God, ſhall have fallen aſleep? How dignified was the character of *Abraham* in this reſpect, and yet he was both a prieſt and prophet, and though married, was the friend of God. But in oppoſition to this, Popery brands marriage as diſhonourable in all, and damnable in ſome.

Secondly, That doctrine which, under the ſhew of piety leadeth to lewdneſs and impurity, is a doctrine of Devils; for, "He that committeth ſin is of the Devil." And that Popery is not chargeable with this, none of its ſtrenuous advocates will be bold enough to deny. For under the pretence of the celibate vow, the floodgates of impurity have been thrown open, and ſuch ſcenes of fornication, adultery, inceſt, ſodomy, and murder have been diſcloſed, as the world

world never ſaw before. Hence, one of their own poets complains, that " *Rome* was become a brothel-houſe, and grown execrable throughout the whole world."* And theſe impurities were not confined to cloyſters and monaſtries, thoſe abodes of darkneſs; but without bluſhing, Pontiffs themſelves made no ſecret of committing them in the face of the world. Popes who aſſumed the title of holineſs, and who rigorouſly impoſed the celibate vow upon others, were themſelves often the moſt ſcandalous and vicious of all men. Pope *Sergius* III. had his *Marozia*, that famous ſtrumpet, who was the miſtreſs of his affections, of whom he begat *John* IX. who was afterwards, by his mother's intrigues, raiſed to the triple crown. *John* XII. was a monſter for lewdneſs; having been guilty, among other vile deeds, of lying with *Stephana*, his father's concubine. *Gregory* VII. had his whore *Matilda*: It was this famous Pontiff, who cauſed the Emperor of *Germany*, with his Empreſs, to come bare-footed, in the cold winter, to his caſtle at *Cannucium*, and there wait three days faſting, before he could have an audience, which was at length obtained by the mediation of Madam *Matilda*. Popes *Martin* IV. *Benedict* XII. *Sextus* IV. *Innocent* VIII. *Alexander* VI. *Julius* II. *Clement* VII. were ſuch infamous monſters of impurity, that *Baronious*, and other Popiſh writers, aſſure us, that mankind bluſhed for their crimes. *Paul* III. proſtituted his ſiſter, *Julia Farneſia*, to *Alexander*

* ——— ——— Roma ipſa lupanar
Reddita, nunc facta eſt toto execrabilis orbe.

der VI. that he might be made a Cardinal, committed inceſt with his own daughter *Conſtantia*; poiſoned her huſband, that he might enjoy her the more freely; was guilty with his own ſiſter, and taken in the act by her huſband. To this it is added, that he was a necromancer, and dealt in magical arts. This was the infallible guide in directing and preſiding over the famous council of *Trent*. It is endleſs to enumerate the impure crimes of fifty Popes, whom cotemporary hiſtorians repreſent as ſo many incarnate Devils. The ſuperiour clergy thus pointing out the way to vice, we may be ſure that their flocks eagerly followed their example; and hiſtory aſſures us, that this was but too true. *Platina* records, that in Pope *Gregory the Great*'s time, there were found ſix thouſand infants ſkulls in a fiſh-pond at *Rome*. —Theſe horrid murders and whoredoms were the deteſtable fruits of the ſo much boaſted of celibate vow.

THIRDLY, There remained but one ſtage more, to arrive at the ſummit of wickedneſs, and that was, to defend it. And we may ſay with the *Romiſh* clergy, in the language of the prophet, "Were they aſhamed, when they did theſe abominations? They were not at all aſhamed, neither could they bluſh!"

ACCORDINGLY, we find the moſt learned and dignified of Popiſh eccleſiaſtics, boldly ſtanding up in defence of theſe crimes, which Heathens puniſhed with death. Cardinal *Hoſius* ſays, "That a prieſt, through the infirmity of the fleſh, falling

into the ſin of fornication, doth ſin leſs than if he ſhould marry;" and he adds, "That although the aſſertion ſeems foul, yet the Catholics account it the moſt honeſt."* *Coſterus* tells us, "That a prieſt, who doth live in fornication, or nouriſh a concubine at his own houſe, although he be guilty of great ſacrilege; yet, he doth more heinouſly offend, if he doth marry."† *Agnenſis* aſſures us, "That he who doth marry, after the celibate vow, doth offend more than if he were guilty with a hundred women."‡ *Molinæus* ſays, "That by the rules of the *Romiſh* church, a ſodomite may exerciſe his prieſthood, and, by that abominable vice, doth not run into irregularity; whereas marriage is judged altogether incompatible with ſacred orders:" And he quotes *Navarrus*, ſaying, "The crime of ſodomy is not comprehended among the crimes which are accounted irregular;" and giveth ſeveral reaſons for it. We are not to wonder at all this, when *John Caſa*, Archbiſhop of *Benevent*, and Dean of the apoſtolic chamber, printed a book in *Venice*, in defence of ſodomy. "He wrote a ſodomitical book, (ſaith *Sleidan*) than which nothing more foul could have been thought of by man; neither did he bluſh to celebrate with praiſes that moſt deteſtable ſin, too much known in *Italy* and *Greece*.§

It is to be noted, that this was that *Caſa*, by whom *Francis Spira* was ſeduced to revolt from the reformed principles to Popery again, which was

* *Hoſii* Confeſſione, *c.* 56 † *Coſt.* de Lætib. Sacerd.

‡ *Matthias Agnenſis.* § *Sleidan* Com. *lib.* 11, *p.* 652.

was the cauſe of ſuch hideous terrors of conſcience afterwards, and of ſo miſerable an end.

In conſequence of all this, the vicious Popes turned theſe abominations into a fund of wealth; and with more than diabolical wickedneſs, erected a court for the ſale of indulgencies to ſins of the moſt foul and atrocious kind. *Tetzel*, one of theſe ſpiritual merchants, with an aſs's load of indulgencies, had the boldneſs, in the preſence of the renowned *Luther*, to advance, "That if it was poſſible to be criminal with the mother of God, here (added he) is a pardon for a very ſmall ſum." Murders of fathers, wives, neighbours, and even of princes, were all pardoned for a little money.

From this ſhort ſketch of genuine Popery, I leave the candid reader to judge if doctrines, which naturally lead to ſuch abominable crimes, are not the doctrines of Devils, thoſe too of the moſt impure kind.

Fourthly, Again, this power who was to ariſe, was to be intolerant, and to anathematize all doctrines that differed from his. "And he cauſed all, both ſmall and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right-hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or ſell, ſave he that had the mark, or the *name of the beaſt, or the number of his name.**

This

* Rev. xiii. 16, 17.

THIS character perfectly correſponds with the ſpirit of Popery, which breathes nothing but intolerance, and wages war againſt every other ſyſtem of tenets whatever. Nor can Papiſts be otherwiſe, ſo long as they maintain its two fundamental tenets, PAPAL SUPREMECY and INFALLIBILITY.—"Can it be worth while (ſays the learned ingenious Biſhop *Hurd)* to ſpend words in fixing this charge of *intolerance* on the church of *Rome*, when her ableſt advocates, even in our days, openly triumph in it?" For proof of this, he refers to one of the moſt eminent writers in *France*, who roundly defends the *murder* of the *Bohemian* martyrs at *Conſtance*, and *the fraud and ill faith*, through which the pious and tender-hearted fathers ruſhed to the perpetration of it.*

INDEED all Popiſh writers reſolutely defend intolerance as a neceſſary ſecurity to their religion. They aſſure us, it is abſolutely proper, to preſerve the unity of the faith, and the ſafety of the ſtate. We have ſeen what ſort of faith that of *Rome* is, in which all men, under the pain of exciſion, are required to believe.

BUT we need neither ancient nor diſtant authorities to prove this charge againſt Papiſts. About five years ago there was a Popiſh book tranſlated from the *French* language, by a *Romiſh* prieſt, in this town, printed here, and was circulated with great induſtry. It is entitled "Deiſm ſelf-refuted;" but its true title is, "Popery recommended

* Monſ. *Crevier* Hiſt. de l'Univerſité de *Paris.*

mended to unwary Proteſtants." It contains all the intolerant and exterminating principles of *Rome*, without diſguiſe. But the chapter on toleration thoroughly convinces us, that the perſecuting genius of Popery is ſtill the ſame. And that the tenets it contains are thoſe of the tranſlator, we are aſſured from his own words: For, having ſtigmatized the whole body of the *Engliſh* Diſſenters with the odious epithet of a "*heterogeneous group of petitioners*," (whom the *Britiſh* ſenate viewed in a very different light, as they readily granted fully the prayer of their petition) he ſets out with recommending this inſidious piece in all the overflowing ſtrains of panegyric. A few extracts may ſuffice to prove the charge:—The author, in the true ſpirit of Popery, agrees with his viſionary antagoniſt (*Rouſſeau*) "That the Bible is a *dumb writing*, often obſcure, and is not the only means God hath been pleaſed to make uſe of to teach mankind the revealed truths; that an ever-living oracle (the Popes no doubt) was requiſite;"* &c. That is, in plain *Engliſh*, the Bible is a very uſeleſs, dumb, imperfect book; but the infallible Pope is an *ever-living oracle!*—What daring blaſphemy have not the emiſſaries of Antichriſt been guilty of!

But to the point: Proteſtants hold, that men are anſwerable to God alone for their religious opinions, and the ſtate muſt protect them in the enjoyment of theſe, provided they do not infringe upon the liberty of others. All wiſe men judge this to be one of the moſt valuable privileges of human

* Letter IV. *p.* 144, 145.

human nature. But Monſ. *Bergier* thinks otherwiſe: "The *toleration*, therefore, which is now to paſs as a ſacred *dogma*, is nothing more than the laſt reſource of party driven to extremities by their own principles; the laſt remedy applied to a deſperate diſeaſe, and which ſerves only to render it *incurable*."* See, Proteſtants, what a deſperate, fooliſh faction ye are, to allow one another mutual forbearance in religious matters! Return, then, to the feet of our Lord God upon earth, our *ever-living oracle*, the Pope, and he will infallibly teach you; whereas, if you hold that dumb, obſcure book, the Bible, you muſt ever err. Why? "Becauſe were your *Toleration* leſs pernicious, I maintain it to be moreover impracticable, unleſs to *knaves* and *hypocrites*."† So you ſee your true character in tolerating all opinions that are not intolerant themſelves, you mad Proteſtants, you are, to ſpeak modeſtly, at beſt "*knaves and hypocrites*;" and by being the one you deſerve the gallows; and the other, to go to the Devil. Accordingly, our mild Son of the *true church* ſends you both theſe ways: "The endeavours, therefore, of the government to keep them under (that is to cut their throats in the maſſacre at *Paris*) was not *perſecution*, but *legal rigour*."‡ Perſecution! No, the murders and maſſacres in *Paris*, and in *Ireland*, were only a little gentle correction to the "*fanatical, hypocritical Calviniſts*." May the Father of Mercies keep us from theſe men of blood, who can with ſuch determined coolneſs defend what would have made a *Nero* ſhudder!—Well, but hear his reaſons: "This not giving a cruel ſtab

* Let. V. *p.* 172 † Let. V. *p.* 182. ‡ Let. V. *p.* 191.

ſtab to humanity, nor offering to God ſacrifices of human blood;" it is only "*purging the body politic of impure blood, or lopping off a rotten member*, the contagion of which might infect all the reſt."* But, Proteſtants, your doom is not confined to this world, if you do not return into the boſom of the *holy church*; for "Out of the church there is no ſalvation."‡ Well, but what church? Why, our church; the only true, apoſtolical, mother church, with our *ever-living oracles*, the Popes, at the head of it. How do I know that? Know! "You may be as infallibly certain, that *Chriſt* committed the care of the church to *Peter*, and that the Popes ſucceeded him in *Rome*, as that *Lewis* XV. ſucceeded *Lewis* XIV. on the throne of *France*."†——*Credat* Judæus—*non Ego*.

You ſee then, brethren, that even in Proteſtant countries, the champions of Popery are far from diſguiſing their ſentiments reſpecting *intolerance*; for they exult and triumph in it as one of the moſt divine, neceſſary, and meritorious dogmas of their communion.—To all this it may be replied, "But this very principle prevails with ſome ſects among yourſelves." I ſhortly reply, If they do ſo, they muſt anſwer for it. But well I know, it is neither the genius of the goſpel, nor the principles of the Proteſtant religion which we hope are the ſame.

Fifthly, The tranſition from *intolerance* to perſecution is ſhort, and indeed neceſſary: And this is the laſt, but dreadful feature of this gloomy power

* Let. V. *p.* 189. ‡ Let. V. *p.* 173. † Let. IV.

power which I ſhall attempt to delineate. "Whoſoever would not worſhip the beaſt and his image was to be ſlain with the ſword. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of ſaints, and of all that were ſlain upon the earth."*—However mild and gentle in Proteſtant countries Popery may appear to unwary eyes, yet for a moment conſider the following ſteps of intolerance, and you will ſee them full of danger, and marked with blood. For in the church of *Rome*, upon a perſon daring to judge for himſelf in religious matters, he is excommunicated; this is followed by being pronounced a *heretic*; and upon obſtinacy, as they call it, he is turned over to the civil arm, as Monſ. *Bergier* ſays, to be cut off as an infected limb that might injure the whole body. Now as the inquiſition is nothing but the higheſt improvement of perſecution, which begins with teſts and negative penalties, but ends with fires and halters, I will enumerate a few of the many cauſes for which men are committed to it; and they are ſuch, and ſo various, that no man who, in the leaſt exerciſe of his faculties, or practices charity or mercy, or even has common commerce with the world, can avoid it.—If he has heard a heretic preach or pray (that is, if he has thus heard the beſt and wiſeſt man upon earth, who differs from their extravagant, idolatrous ſyſtem) if when he is ſummoned, he appear not; if being excommunicated, he ſue not for abſolution; if a heretic (for example a Mr *Locke*, or a Sir *Iſaac Newton*) be his friend; if he do any act of kindneſs for a heretic—viſit him, treat him, aſſiſt him, or ſhew him pity,

* Rev. xviii. 24.

pity, or give him counſel; if he ſuſpect the truth of their lying legends and forged miracles; if he aſſert the indifference of meats or of days, or interpret the ſcripture according to his own or common ſenſe; if he conceals any herefy, his own or other people's; if he ſpare father or mother, wife or child,—he is for theſe, or any of theſe cauſes, and for a thouſand others, liable to the unparalleled cruelties of the inquiſition.

As a proof of what quick havock ſuch a tribunal muſt make in a country, Cardinal *Turquemeda*, the firſt inquiſitor-general in *Spain*, even in the infancy of the inquiſition, brought an hundred thouſand ſouls into it, in the ſmall ſpace of fourteen years: Of theſe, ſix thouſand were burnt alive.—Can the merciful and wiſe God; can the meek and compaſſionate *Jeſus*, who laid down his life for men, have any thing to do with ſuch a church, or with ſuch inhuman butchers, impudently calling themſelves *holy*, and their *ſlaughter-houſe* the *holy office!*—But here nature ſhudders, and entreats us to draw a veil over her murdered children, till the great day of retribution, when the earth ſhall diſcloſe her blood, and ſhall no more conceal her ſlain.

THE inſtruction which naturally ariſes from the ſubject, thus briefly viewed, may

FIRST, Point out to us the dreadful demerit of ſin. *Corruptio optimi peſſima*, was a common maxim among ſchoolmen; and it holds good here. Nothing is ſo excellent as the goſpel in its purity, and

nothing more fatal can befal men than when they wantonly pervert the purity and perfection of its doctrines. "Whoſo was to fall upon this ſtone was to be broken."——In the early ages, particularly in the firſt century, there was no church which ſhone with greater purity than that of *Rome*, "whoſe faith was ſpoken of throughout the whole world." But, alas! how did the gold become dim! Clerical pride, luxury, and impiety pervaded every ſtation in the church; till at laſt divine juſtice permitted that dreadful power to ariſe out of their own boſom, who has proved, for above a thouſand years, the greateſt ſcourge that ever tormented the world. Tremble, ye careleſs and impious *Britons*, who ſeem weary of CHRIST and his peaceful yoke, leſt an offended God give you again to the galling ſcourge of ANTICHRIST; and then indeed ye fall into the hands of a cruel lord.

SECONDLY, We ſee from the ſubject, what an ineſtimable bleſſing the glorious reformation has been to mankind.—In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the fires of the inquiſition blazed from *Goa* to *Mexico*, and all nations of the world trembled before the tyrannical, bloody power of *Rome*; but ever ſince that bleſſed event, thoſe fires have been more cautiouſly kindled, and the thunder of the vatican has been leſs regarded, ſince wiſe and brave men reclaimed thoſe rights from the Popes, with which God and nature have inveſted rational beings. "*Sic volo, ſic jubeo, ſtat pro ratione voluntas*," the famous motto of papal power, is now held in juſt deriſion by every ſtate

ſtate almoſt in the world. "By me kings reign, and princes decree juſtice," begins to be applied to a more auguſt and bleſſed perſonage than the blaſphemous Popes of *Rome*. What then do we not owe to the virtue and intrepidity of our forefathers, who with their blood extinguiſhed thoſe fires, and who wrenched the rod of dominion out of ſuch bloody hands! Conſider ſlavery,—what it is, how bitter a draught, and how many millions have been made to drink it; which, if it can poiſon all earthly happineſs when exerciſed barely upon our bodies, what muſt it be when it comprehends both the ſlavery of body and mind?—To conceive this, take another look into the hiſtory of the *Romiſh* church and her tyrants, (or rather executioners) who ſeem to take pleaſure in the pangs and convulſions of their fellow creatures. Once more examine the inquiſition, hear the melancholy notes ſounded in every cell.—— Conſider the anguiſh of mock trials, and the exquiſite tortures conſequent thereupon, mercileſsly inflicted upon the unfortunate; where the racked and weary ſoul has ſo often wiſhed to take its leave, but cruelly not ſuffered to depart.—Conſider all this, and view *Rome* with a favourable eye, if you can. Ah, how would our virtuous anceſtors, were they again to viſit our world, bluſh at beholding us, their degenerate offſpring, removing thoſe barriers which they with ſteady hands placed againſt the encroachments of ſanguinary Popiſh tyrants!—"Can a man take coals of fire into his boſom, and not be burnt?" Will the prudent *Hollander* remove his dykes under the belief that the ſea will not again overflow his fertile

tile plains?—Equally frantic and inconſiderate is it for *Britons* to remove thoſe wiſe and ſalutary laws againſt Popery, which, under providence, have given peace to our happy iſland for near a hundred years. It is often ſaid "we wiſh to perſecute." The charge is ill-grounded.——We claim the liberty of worſhipping the true and living God in the way we think the moſt acceptable: And why reſtrain Papiſts from worſhipping a wafer, a croſs, or a ſaint's tooth? Why indeed?—But with this mode of worſhip they aſſure mankind, that had they power they would cauſe us to do ſo too, or they would burn us alive, and in ſo doing they did God ſervice.—Is this a ſlander? No, it is a truth; a thouſand years of dreadful experience have demonſtrated it. "But Popery is changed." Can fire change its qualities, or poiſon ceaſe to kill? No more can Popery change its nature. It is true the ſalutary reſtraints laid upon thoſe of the communion of *Rome* have made an external change upon their deportment; and for years paſt they have lived peaceable ſubjects: But do they renounce the ſpiritual dominion of the Pope? Have the Pope and conſiſtory of *Rome* ratified the new oath which Papiſts take to our government? No, nor ever will. The See of *Rome*, which claims univerſal dominion, relinquiſhes none of its pretenſions. We have, it is true, wrenched by the reformation a great part of this aſſumed power from the Pope; but for that deed our reformation is branded with the odious epithet of the "northern hereſy;" and the Pope every year ſolemnly anathematizes all Proteſtants, and dooms them to everlaſting pains,

(as

(as far as he can) unleſs they return again to his gloomy dominion.——To cheriſh Popery, is not only impolitic, but it is

THIRDLY, Impious.——I deteſt bigotry; but God forbid that we ſhould eſteem equally the religion of CHRIST, and that of ANTICHRIST: The one is the greateſt bleſſing that ever viſited the ſons of men, and the other the greateſt curſe. ——Inconſiderate Proteſtant, however exalted your ſtation in life may be, read the following paſſage, and be juſtly afraid of its ſolemn contents: "And there followed another mighty angel, ſaying, *Babylon* is fallen, is fallen, that great city; becauſe ſhe made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, ſaying with a loud voice, if any man worſhip the beaſt or his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the ſame ſhall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he ſhall be tormented with fire and brimſtone in the preſence of the holy angels, and in the preſence of the lamb."* To ſtand firm and unſeduced by the dangerous arts of *Rome*, is pronounced "The patience of the ſaints, and of thoſe who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of *Jeſus*."

FOURTHLY, laſtly, Let the perfection of your religion be evinced by the purity of your lives. The genuine fruits of the true faith are "love, joy,

* Rev. xiv. 8, 9, 10.

joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance: againſt ſuch there is no law."* In vain will you attempt to perſuade the world of the ſuperior excellency of your religion, while your lives and conduct are oppoſite to its temper and ſpirit.

LET us conclude with looking up to the throne of power and of grace:——"Father, whoſe dominion is over all, look down from Heaven, thy dwelling-place, upon the city of our ſolemnities; let thine eyes behold our *Zion* a quiet habitation! Oh may thou, who carried thy church of old through the wilderneſs on eagles wings, ſtill guard it with thy irreſiſtible power, and cheriſh it in the boſom of thy tender compaſſion! May thy kingdom come, and upon the ruins of Antichriſt's erect a dominion which ſhall extend from ſea to ſea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. We lift up our eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens ſhall vaniſh away like ſmoke, and the earth ſhall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein ſhall die in like manner; but thy ſalvation ſhall be for ever, and thy righteouſneſs ſhall not be aboliſhed. And, if for our continued and heaven-daring crimes, thou in thy awful ſovereignty art about to remove the goſpel, and puniſh our guilty iſland, may thy mercy towards the religion which is pure and undefiled, ſtill provide for them a *Zoar* to which they may retreat from the impending deſtruction. And to thy name be aſcribed all power and glory, for ever. Amen!"

* Gal. v. 22, 23.

F I N I S.

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